TIMELY FARM TOPICS No. 40b

PLANNING FARMSTEAD WIRING

Transcribed talk by James R. Cobb, Head, Power Utilization Program, Rural Electrification Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Recorded August 2, 1945. Time 5 minutes and 24 seconds, without announcer's parts.

TRANSCRIPTION:

The kind of service you get from electricity on your farm depends to a large extent on your wiring system. If your farm is poorly wired...with only a few places to connect electric equipment...small wires and little planning for the future, you will not be able to get the help you should from electric power. But if your farm is well wired...if you have plenty of lights...plenty of outlets for connecting electric equipment where you want to use it...and wiring heavy enough to serve the extra equipment you may want to add from time to time, your electricity will become more and more useful as time goes on.

A good wiring system will last for many years with little or no additional expense. In fact, most of us when we wire a farm--if we do the job right--can expect that wiring to last our lifetime...

So you see it pays to do the job right when you're doing it.

Planning your wiring system is a job for the whole family. The best way is to make a floor plan of each building on the farmstead. Then indicate the place where you want each light...where each switch should be located and where you will need outlets for connecting electrical equipment. That will take some looking ahead, because you'll have to consider the equipment you'll probably add within the next five, ten or fifteen years.

When you're through, check the plan carefully for mistakes. Planning a wiring system is a little like picking out a wife--or husband. Whatever you get, you'll probably have to live with for quite a while--for better or worse. If you locate a switch in an unhandy spot or forget to put a light or outlet where you need one, you may have to put up with the inconvenience for a long time.

Careful planning, then, is the first step. From there on a lot depends on finding a good, reliable electrician to make the installation. Don't let an inexperienced person sell you on the idea that he can do the job for less money. There's a lot more to wiring a farm than connecting two wires to every socket. A good electrician has the know-how. He'll help you find the bugs in your wiring plan...he'll see that the right materials are used in the right place. In the long run, he'll save you money. Even more important, he'll give you a safe job... wiring free from fire hazards or hazards to persons or livestock on your farm.

Just a word of warning, however. Regardless of who does your wiring, it should be inspected by a qualified inspector from your power supplier before the electricity is turned on. This is for your protection...extra insurance that your wiring system is absolutely safe and dependable before you start to use it.

Now, here are a few special points which you may find helpful in planning your wiring system.

If you're wiring two or more buildings, it will pay you to ask that the service wires from the highlines be brought to a centrally-located yard pole. From the yard pole, separate sets of wires or "circuits" can then be run to each building. No one set of wires will then have to carry too much electricity, and each separate circuit can have its own device for turning off the current automatically if something goes wrong and a short circuit develops in that part of your wiring system.

Next, about lights. Your farm should have at least one large light out of doors to light up your yard...maybe two or three. It's a good idea to have at least one of these lights wired so you can turn it off and on from either the house or the barn. Costs a little more but will save many steps. As for light fixtures, and lamps in the home, they need not be expensive. The important thing is to select them for the place you expect to use them and the job you want them to do. In each case, they should give enough light without letting light glare directly in your eyes.

Be sure to plan for plenty of outlets in and around the farm buildings so you can connect farm equipment where you need it...not only the equipment you will have right away, but what you will want to use later on. Outlets for connecting electric equipment are important in the house, too. You will need at least two in the kitchen, two in the living room and at least one in each of the other rooms in the house. Most people when they wire, think they are putting in too many outlets. But as soon as the electrician finishes and goes on to another job, they start wishing they had planned for more. So you plan for plenty of outlets.

Finally, a word of caution. Don't try to cut corners or to get by with cheap materials. Good wiring costs little more than poor wiring and it will last a long time. Over a period of years, good wiring costs much less. A good, well planned wiring system will pay back the difference in installation cost many times over in savings of electricity you use. In addition, it will give you all the benefits of convenience, safety and many years of dependable service.

You will want more information than I've been able to give you in this short time, so I suggest that you go to your Power Supplier, County or Home Extension Agent, and talk to them about your plans. They can help you with your particular problems.

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ANNOUNCER'S OPENING AND CLOSING

OPENING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE): Now that wartime restrictions on building electric power lines have been eased up, a good many folks in the ______________ (Station) area probably will be getting electric service within the next few months. Line construction in some sections is well under way, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture reports that during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1946, the Rural Electrification Administration will allot more money as loans than in any previous year in its history. Congress has authorized REA to lend a total of 200 million dollars, beginning July 1, 1945. With loan allotments from this 200 million, plus funds available from previous loans, REA borrowers in ______________ (State) are getting off to a good start on their postwar program. The Department of Agriculture estimates that in three years REA-financed cooperatives will be able to build power lines and related facilities costing $______________ to serve ______________ farms and other rural consumers in ______________ (State). A lot of folks will be wiring their places soon... so they will be ready to use electricity when the highlines come by. That's a job which should be done right...so this morning...in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture...we bring you a transcribed talk on wiring by James R. Cobb, the man in charge of power utilization activities for the Rural Electrification Administration.

CLOSING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE): Thanks for the tip, Mr. Cobb. As head of the power utilization program of the Rural Electrification Administration, Mr. James R. Cobb has outlined for us today, some of the important points to keep in mind in correctly wiring farm homes and farm buildings.

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3-YEAR REA PROGRAM FOR POSTWAR RURAL ELECTRIFICATION - BY STATES
(Tentative).

Area	Rural Consumers to Receive Service	Investment Required for Program
Alabama	42,700	12,000,000
Arizona	5,200	2,100,000
Arkansas	47,400	20,100,000
California	3,700	2,250,000
Colorado	15,900	9,400,000
Delaware	3,000	1,250,000
Florida	10,100	4,750,000
Georgia	89,500	25,600,000
Idaho	5,100	3,950,000
Illinois	42,700	19,500,000
Indiana	34,900	14,525,000
Iowa	51,600	27,000,000
Kansas	23,300	12,600,000
Kentucky	46,600	15,500,000
Louisiana	37,500	16,100,000
Maine	1,300	525,000
Maryland	6,900	3,300,000
Michigan	12,300	7,600,000
Minnesota	57,700	31,500,000
Mississippi	53,300	15,500,000
Missouri	114,600	46,500,000
Montana	10,300	5,100,000
Nebraska	24,700	13,300,000
Nevada	500	255,000
New Hampshire	2,800	1,950,000
New Jersey	800	450,000
New Mexico	8,200	4,150,000
New York	6,600	2,830,000
North Carolina	71,200	28,000,000
North Dakota	15,600	9,000,000
Ohio	16,500	7,750,000
Oklahoma	77,700	38,800,000
Oregon	13,300	7,000,000
Pennsylvania	17,200	11,300,000
South Carolina	34,000	11,050,000
South Dakota	14,700	7,750,000
Tennessee	57,900	16,600,000
Texas	157,200	66,000,000
Utah	2,500	1,550,000
Vermont	4,000	3,350,000
Virginia	26,200	15,200,000
Washington	12,200	7,750,000
West Virginia	3,200	1,350,000
Wisconsin	34,400	20,700,000
Wyoming	9,800	5,300,000
Alaska	900	750,000
Virgin Islands	1,600	400,000

Not available for Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island.

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